1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

142 days and then mysteriously to have disappeared. The hair of the men often trailed on the ground, and Henry, Catlin, and others [302] refer to this in much detail. Now they wear their hair cut short, of their own volition, and in my brief visit I noticed no peculiarities of complexion or in color or hair. All of them, Mandans, Aricarees, and Minnetarees, seem to be a sturdy, manly set of fellows, with frank and intelligent countenances. I am inclined to think they have not had the best of supervision in the past, nor been treated with sufficient liberality and consideration by the government."

000 **Noted Chiefs—Patriarchs.** "Catlin was effusive in his praise of these Indians, and both he and Maximilian appear to have found some individuals who savored strongly of the Chingachgook type of Indian, and whose memories and virtues are venerated today. Such a man, for one, was the old Mah-to-toh-papa, or Four Bears, of Catlin, the Meto-Tope of Maximilian, and I can easily believe that Lean, or Poor Wolf, a Gros Ventre of today, now blind and infirm with the weight of his eighty-three years, has been a man that one could trust and respect. De Smet says that Four Bears was 'the most civil and affable Indian' that he ever met on the Missouri. Two-Chiefs, and Leggings, Mandans, and now old like Poor Wolf, a Gros Ventre, or Hidatsa, must also have been men of dignity and character." (Wheeler, p. 240.)

144 **Race Declining.** "As a pure race 'the polite and friendly Mandans,' as they were known to the traders, are slowly but surely declining, and it will not be long before the last one will have departed for the happy hunting grounds. The reservation rolls call for two hundred and fifty Mandans. In talking with Two-Chiefs, I asked him how many full-blood, pure Mandans he thought still remained. The old man, seventy-two years of age, stood in deep thought for several moments, and then replied, 'Not more than ten families; all the others are mixed blood.' Numerically, the tribe as a whole seems to be holding its own." (Wheeler, p. 242.)

•731 **Fort Mandan.** "Not a vestige of Fort Mandan remains. On the return of the expedition in 1806, under date of August 17th, the Lewis and Clarke itinerary says: 'In reaching Fort Mandan we found a few pickets standing on the riverside, but all the houses except one, had been burnt by an accidental fire.'

1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

"What the 'accidental fire' left, the remorseless river took long ago. The character of the Missouri along here for the rapid cutting of its banks has been abundantly shown. A century has given ample opportunity for that one hut and those few pickets to have been insidiously undermined and carried away by the stream, and we know from Maximilian that this had been done in 1833." (Wheeler, p. 271.)

Wheeler thus expresses his profound impressions upon looking up and down the Missouri from the location of Fort Mandan:

Knife River and "Coal Bluff." "As I stood on the high bluffs of the river at this point in 1899, and overlooked the scene, I was profoundly impressed. To the north the distant valley of Knife river, deep green with heavy foliage, leads down to the Missouri; to the south the rough, bluffy ground near me grows rougher and bluffier as it reaches a big bend, and the irregular, grayish, ash-colored cut bank seems like that of a prodigious railway cut; the great river, in a wide, swollen flood, rolls on as it did a hundred years ago, and in broad, massive curve sweeps around a low point on the opposite shore, when, in a mood of inconstancy, it whirls back again in the other direction, and, at the beginning of the curve, is that 'bluff of coal' mentioned by the explorers, standing out strong and plain as a guide to us. Those were the limits—the 'bluff of coal' to the south, the Knife river to the north, and between them were the old Mandan villages, now gone forever.

"There extends for one and one-half or two miles a flat, heavily timbered bottom—Elm Point it is now called, and down near the lower end of it was where old Fort Mandan stood, and with our glasses we can make out, on the opposite shore, all that is left of Fort Clarke, the trading post named after Captain Clarke, and of which but a trace remains." (p. 272.)

Wheeler thus refers to the ravages of the smallpox among the Mandans:

Smallpox. "The worst affliction of this sort was subsequent to the visits of Catlin and Maximilian, and it almost completely annihilated the Mandans, if the old accounts are fairly trustworthy.

"In 1837 the smallpox was carried among them from the Missouri river steamboat **St. Peter's**, owned by the American Fur Company, and out of 1600 Mandans, only about 31 or 32 families-

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

believed that the supernatural powers were transferred to her own body. These supernatural powers were in turn transmitted to her husband in the daily activities of living and working together. Men receiving sacred objects either to own or to hold took them in the same manner but did not hold them to the breast.

The faith of the Mandan in their sacred objects was unshaken by two severe smallpox epidemics. They speak of these epidemics as unfortunate and explain the impotency of their rites to protect the tribe on the grounds that, when the original ceremonies were introduced into the tribe, the sacred beings made no promise of tribal immunity to the white man's diseases. They believe that the tribe would have been exterminated by their enemies subsequent to the last smallpox epidemic had the ceremonies been abandoned.

The Mandan sacred bundles fall into two general categories. They are (1) the hereditary tribal bundles and (2) the personal bundles. Of these two groups of bundles, the former played a more significant role in the total ceremonial life and in a large measure set the background for the supernatural experiences which instituted the personal bundles.

At this point it would be well to indicate some of the general characteristics of these bundles not indicated in the main body of the report. The Mandan place greatest values on those bundles and ceremonies which traditionally were instituted in very early times. Foremost of these are the Okipa, founded by Lone Man and Hoita, and those Corn ceremonies which were founded by Good Furred Robe. Not only are these two ceremonies considered oldest, but they also involve the greatest number of participants.

The Okipa was without question the most complicated and colorful ceremony performed in the Northern Plains. According to tradition, the principal officers of the ceremony belonged to the WaxikEna clan. This clan was intrusted with the care and repair of the sacred cedar and other sacred objects appertaining to the ceremony. A male member of that clan occupied the sacred lodge and acted as announcer whenever tribal ceremonies were performed. A man selected one of his own clan to become his son-in-law to perpetuate the lineage in the sacred